The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS UNTIL JULY 12, 1999

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 1, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS M. DAVIS to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through July 12, 1999.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the appointment is accepted.

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING LATE UNC-CHAPEL HILL CHANCELLOR MICHAEL HOOKER

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Michael Hooker, the Chancellor of the University of North Carolina. This Nation has lost a great educator, and I have lost a good friend.

Chancellor Hooker passed away Tuesday in the midst of his own service to the public after a courageous battle with cancer. He was just 53 years of age. Our prayers go out to his family.

In his 4 years at UNC, Chancellor Hooker established a reputation as a driven leader with a firm vision for North Carolina's future. He was committed to making UNC the best public university in the Nation. Hooker earned the respect of students, faculty and the citizens of North Carolina with his confidence and enthusiasm. Chancellor Hooker forged a strong bond with many students by meeting them on their own turf. He was a regular at UNC's dining halls and recreation centers and even was spotted crowd surfing in the student section during a UNC basketball game against their rival Duke University.

Mr. Speaker, as the former superintendent of my State and as the father of a UNC graduate, I know firsthand what an outstanding man Michael Hooker was. I worked with him on many projects. His vision and leadership will have a lasting impact on both the University and the citizens of North Carolina for years to come. Rest in peace, Michael Hooker.

He is survived by his wife, Carmen; his daughter, Alexandra; his mother Christine Hooker; and two stepdaughters, Jennifer and Cyndi Buell. Our prayers go out to his family.

Michael Hooker grew up in the coal country of Southwestern Virginia, where he quickly leaned the value of education. Michael once said that his parents decided to have only one child to better commit their attention to his education. His parents' commitment paid off, as Michael earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy from UNC in 1969. After his graduation, he went on to great success, rising from a teaching post at Harvard University to the Presidency of Vermont's Bennington College at the young age of 36. Hooker then spent six years leading the University of Maryland-Baltimore County and another three years as the president of the University of Massachusetts system before returning to North Carolina to lead his alma matter into the 21st century.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WE ARE WEARING THEM OUT: WHY WE NEED TO INCREASE ARMY TROOP STRENGTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, this year, at the urging of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other senior military leaders, Congress has taken some critically important steps to improve military pay and benefits. Both the House and the Senate have now approved versions of the Fiscal Year 2000 Defense Authorization Bill that provide higher than requested pay raises for service personnel and reforms the pay table to better reward personnel who have performed particularly well and that repeal reductions in military retirement benefits enacted in 1986.

Although there remain minor differences between the two chambers on some details, service members can be assured that these much needed and much deserved improvements in pay and benefits are on the way.

I hope that the fine young men and women who serve in our Nation's military will see this as evidence that we appreciate what they are doing, that we are aware of how hard they are working, and that we understand, to some degree at least, the tremendous personal sacrifices we ask them to make for our country.

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Having addressed pay and benefits, it is now time for the leaders in the military services and for the Congress to consider other critical steps to ease the burdens of military service. First and foremost in my mind is the need to stop imposing dreadfully excessive day-to-day demands on large parts of the force. The Congress is approving better pay and benefits in the hope that these measures will help stem the hemorrhage of high quality people from the force and ease recruitment of some new high quality people. Pay table reform in particular is designed to encourage the best of the best, the people whose work has led to rapid promotion, to stay in the service for a full career. But service members are not leaving the force simply or mainly because they are not being paid enough. Nobody makes the armed forces a career because of the financial rewards. Rather, too many good people are leaving because we are wearing them out.

Let me emphasize that point again, Mr. Speaker, we are wearing them out. While it is not true of all parts of the force, for too many service members and too many key military specialties, their lives have become a never-ending and often unpredictable cycle of stand-ups and stand-downs; of preparation for exercises, exercises and recovery from exercises; of preparation for deployment abroad, deployment in often tense missions overseas, and of recovery from deployment; of temporary duty assignments to fill out units engaged in exercises or in missions abroad, or of working doubly hard at home to take up the slack caused by the loss of people on temporary duty assignments, and on and on. Unless we take steps to reduce the number of days many service members spend away from home, unless we ease the intensity and constancy of periods of overwork, unless we improve the predictability of periods away from home, unless we do all of these things, the extra pay and benefits we are providing will have but little effect in preserving a high quality, well-trained, ready military force.

All of the military services suffer from the problem of overwork to one degree or another. And all of the services are taking steps to try to ease the workload. Today, however, I want to talk in particular about the state of the Army, where I believe the underlying problems are most deep-rooted and where measures to ameliorate the problem will have to be most far reaching.

To put it bluntly, the Army today is too small. It is not big enough to carry out all of the responsibilities assigned to it without wearing out too many of its best people. We need a bigger Army. How much bigger? I will not at this time venture to say. I do not know whether we need 5,000 more people in the Army or 20,000 or 40,000. But I know we need more. For the record, in testimony before the House Committee on Armed Services in January 1996, Lieutenant General Ted Stroup, who was then the Army personnel chief, said the Army should be at 520,000 active duty troops, which is 40,000 more than is currently authorized.

I believe as well that we cannot afford to follow through on measures to

reduce further the size of the Army National Guard and Reserve components. They, like the active Army, have been reduced enough. Instead of shrinking them further, we need to work on measures to improve the way in which reserve components can help, even more than they have, to ease the strains on the active part of the force.

To his credit, the new Chief of Staff of the Army, General Eric Shinseki, has begun already to raise the issue of personnel levels. In his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee 3 weeks ago, General Shinseki opened the door to a discussion of troop levels, saying, ''It would be a bit premature for me to tell you that raising the end strength right now is the right call. But I think it is a legitimate concern.'' He clarified that comment a bit more last week in his first press conference as Chief of Staff when he said that he suspects the Army will decide it needs more troops after it completes its current review of Army requirements, called ''Total Army Analysis—2007,'' over the next few months.

While I look forward to the results of ''TAA–07,'' for me the question is not whether the Army should pursue an increase of some significant magnitude in its personnel strength—the question is how much and how fast. And I think the sooner the Army leadership begins to make the case for a necessary increase, the better Congress will be prepared to address it, and, more importantly, the sooner the troops will feel that some relief is coming. To explain my reasoning, I want to walk through, step by step, how shortfalls in Army personnel levels have developed in the post-Cold War period and how they have affected the people in the service.

To begin with, like the other services, the Army has drawn down force levels substantially since the end of the Cold War. At the end of fiscal year 1987, the Army had 780,000 active duty troops. At the end of fiscal year 1999, the Army's authorized end-strength will be down to 480,000 troops, which is 38% less. In fact, the Army is actually falling considerably short of its authorized troop level—as of April 30 of this year, there were 469,314 active duty troops in the service.

The Army's cut in end-strength is roughly commensurate with cuts in the size of the force structure, that is, in the number of units in the force. Over the last 12 years, the Army has come down from 18 active divisions to 10, which is a reduction of 44%. The number of brigades has come down somewhat less, because almost all Army divisions are now wholly filled with active duty units rather than some being filled with round-out units from the National Guard, as in the past.

As it has turned out, however, simply shrinking Cold War troop levels in proportion to cuts in the Cold War force structure has not been appropriate in coping with post-Cold War demands on the force. The root cause of the problem is that the Army has deliberately maintained—in the post Cold-War environment as it did during the Cold War—a somewhat larger force structure than it has people to fill. If you take a table or organization for the entire active duty Army today, and count up all the jobs in the organization—including combat jobs, headquarters staff, training, medical, and other support positions—you will come up with a requirement for about 540,000 full time uniformed personnel. As I said, the Army actually has an authorized end-strength of 480,000, which is 60,000 troops, or about 11 percent, below the level need to fully man the organizational structure.

During the Cold War, and to some degree even today, it made sense to fall somewhat short of filling all the Army's positions. As the Defense Department has said in its annual ''Manpower Requirements Report,''

> During peacetime, it is neither necessary nor desirable to fill all positions in all units. Some units may not be staffed at all, due to a lack of funding or because we can fill them in an expeditious manner following mobilization. Some units may be staffed with a combination of active and reserve people. As a unit is tasked to perform more in peacetime, the proportion of full-time people, whether active, reserve, or civilian, may be expected to increase.

This explains the underlying premise of the manning policies of the Army, and, to differing degrees, of the other services. In peacetime, units deployed on missions and units designated to deploy early in a conflict, are maintained at full or close-to-full manning levels, while units designated to deploy later and many support activities are maintained at lower levels. In the event of a conflict, critical needs can be filled by reassigning people within the force or by tapping other sources of personnel—including recent retirees who still have an obligation or members of the individual ready reserve, IRR, which is mainly composed of people who have not reenlisted after completing their contractual tours of duty, but who also have a period of obligation remaining.

This system makes sense if you are preparing for an all-out war with the Soviet Union and its allies, as in the Cold War, or for two major theater wars, as planners initially assumed in the post-Cold War era. If the prospect of a major conflict arises, then you do whatever it takes to get the force fully prepared—you take people out of the training system and put them into combat units; you mobilize reserve units and assign some personnel to active units to fill them out; you call back recent retirees and members of the individual ready reserve as needed to fill critical positions. The fully manned Army organization is really a wartime organization, which is not necessary to maintain in peacetime.

In the post-Cold War period, however, we have found that peacetime is not what it used to be. It is not a period in which the Army—or the other services—can focus simply on preparing for the most demanding conflicts in the future. The world is a dangerous place—now. Iraq and North Korea have simmered, threatening to flare into regional crises. India and Pakistan have tested nuclear weapons and are currently engaged in a territorial dispute. Peace in Bosnia and Kosovo confound a neat, easy solution. Terrorism still rears its ugly head. Since the end of the Cold War, our military has responded to an average of one crises or contingency a month, a pace of operations 300% greater than during the Cold War.

Some may argue that we should simply decrease our pace of operations. They would be wrong. The United States must remain engaged in the world. Our global engagement prevents the growth of malevolent powers that could threaten our security. Our engagement provides stability in a world more globally dependent than at any time in history. The world's stability affects our stability. It is simply in America's interests to shape the peace.

The post-Cold War era is a period in which forces have been required to prepare for major theater wars and also to participate in recurring peacekeeping operations, to maintain a constant, active forward presence, and to engage in an extraordinarily broad range of exercises and other activities, with long-time allies and former foes, as part of a policy of international engagement. Senior Army officers have said that this so-called ''peacetime'' has actually been as demanding for the force as a major theater war would be. There is, of course, one big difference—unlike a war, the current demands never go away. There is the strong possibility that if we continue with the high operational tempo, and I foresee no letup, we will truly end up with a hollow Army.

A policy of not fully manning later deploying units and of not fully manning many critical support functions would make sense if peacetime were actually peaceful, such as during the 1920s and 1930s. But such a policy does not make sense when a wartime level of demand is constantly being imposed on precisely the forces that are deliberately being undermanned on the assumption that they can be built up in the event of a crisis. The effects of this policy have been very deterimental for large parts of the Army. Last year and this, subcommittees of the House Armed Services Committee held a number of hearings to explore the impact of the demanding post-Cold War pace of operations on personnel readiness in different services—including hearings in Norfolk, in Naples Italy, and in San Diego. Last year, at the request of the Committee, the General Accounting Office also surveyed personnel readiness in later-deploying active Army divisions.

While I won't go into great detail on what we learned from these investigations, I will highlight a few points that illustrate what I see to be the general situation. First of all, the Army, as I said earlier, has followed a policy of most fully manning early deploying divisions, while later-deploying units and many support units are less fully manned. The problem is that later-deploying units, by definition, are the units expected to be available for contingency operations, such as those in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, the Persian Gulf, and now Kosovo. In particular, later-deploying Army units include brigades deployed in Europe, where forces are expected not only to deploy to Bosnia and elsewhere, but also to be actively involved in engagement exercises with allies and others in the region.

When a Europe-based brigade sends part of its force into Bosnia, the units being deployed there have to be fully manned to carry out the mission. But this will further deplete a brigade that to begin with is manned at only 90% of total authorized strength. The problems become particularly acute because troop shortages are never evenly distributed. So if there is an Army-wide shortage at certain grades or in certain specialties, later-deploying units will be even shorter in those positions. Spending part of the force on a mission can virtually strip the remainder of the unit of key personnel. And because there is an Army-wide

policy of not fully manning certain support positions, including positions as important to mission support as intelligence and communications, shortages in some areas leave some units with virtually no capability on hand.

The General Accounting Office survey I referred to gave some dramatic examples of the effect:

At the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Armored Division, only 16 of 116 M1A1 tanks had full crews and were qualified, and in one of the Brigade's two armor battalions, 14 of 58 tanks had no crewmembers assigned because the personnel were deployed to Bosnia. In addition, at the Division's engineer brigade in Germany, 11 of 24 bridge teams had no personnel assigned.

[C]aptains and majors are in short supply Army-wide due to drawdown initiatives undertaken in recent years. The five later-deploying divisions had only 91 percent and 78 percent of the captains and majors authorized, respectively, but 138 percent of the lieutenants authorized. The result is that unit commanders must fill leadership positions in many units with less experienced officers than Army doctrine requires. For example, in the 1st Brigade of the 1st Infantry division, 65 percent of the key staff positions designated to be filled by captains were actually filled by lieutenants or captains that were not graduates of the Advanced Course.

There is also a significant shortage of the NCOs in the later-deploying divisions. Again, within the 1st Brigade, 226, or 17 percent of the 1,450, total NCO authorizations, were not filled at the time of our visit.

[T]o deploy an 800-soldier task force [to Bosnia] last year, the Commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team had to reassign 63 soldiers within the brigade to serve in infantry squads of the deploying unit, strip non-deploying infantry and armor units of maintenance personnel, and reassign NCOs and support personnel to the task force from throughout the brigade. These actions were detrimental to the readiness of the non-deploying units. For example, gunnery exercises for two armor battalions had to be canceled and 43 of 116 tank crews became unqualified on the weapon system.

Mr. Speaker, I know that other Members of the House have gone on their own fact-finding trips to Europe, and almost everyone comes back with the same story—that Army personnel would talk their ears off about shortfalls in personnel and the killing effect this has on the day-to-day operational tempo. These concerns come not mainly from forces actually deployed on missions, but from forces left behind to take up the slack. I am here to tell you that these are not just a few isolated cases—they reflect a very wide-spread situation in later-deploying Army units, because there just are not enough people to go around given the operational requirements.

To test that proposition, I asked the Army Legislative Liaison office to provide me with a rundown of the current personnel situation in each of the 10 active divisions. They did a good job of it—in particular I want to thank Lt. Col. Joe Guzowski and Lt. Col. Craig Deare for putting together very useful, well organized data very quickly. I am afraid I may have contributed a bit to the overwork problem I'm discussing here today, but, as usual, they came through.

The information they collected shows especially severe personnel shortfalls in units deployed in Europe, more isolated and less serious problems in some other later-deploying divisions, and generally good personnel levels in early-deploying divisions. Here are a few excerpts:

1st Infantry Division (Germany)

The Division is 94% assigned strength and 88% available strength and 86% deployable strength. Available senior grade is 88%. They have a shortage of 436 NCOs, 73% of their required Majors and 84% of required Captains, which continue to cause junior leaders to fill vacant positions.

The Division remains critical in maintenance supervisors, to include Aviation maintenance warrant examiners . . . which remain at 0% fill.

The Division's MI Military Intelligence battalion is below for the eleventh consecutive month and without extensive augmentation is not capable of performing sustained combat operations.

1st Armored Division (Germany) [Which will take on the KFOR mission in Kosovo]

[Due to] shortages of soldiers in critical division competencies resulting from deployment on contingency operations, the division cannot deploy to meet assigned . . . missions without augmentation and training time.

Personnel trained in critical division competencies are deployed on contingency operations. These training issues make the division unable to function effectively for division level operations without extensive assistance.

The continued downward trend in NCO strength (85%, short 724 NCOs) hinders the division's ability to provide adequate supervision and training.

4th Infantry Division (Fort Hood, Texas and Fort Carson, Colorado)

The division remains at borderline . . . Senior grade shortages continue to be primary concern. The [overall] personnel strength percentages continue to mask critical shortages.

Captains and Majors are short . . .

NCOs are short . . . [by] 450.

10th Infantry Division [Which is preparing to deploy to Bosnia]

The division's aggregate strength and infantry squad manning are at the highest levels in over 18 months and continue to improve. . . . NCO shortages were the primary reason for . . . failure.

The shortage of field artillery NCOs . . . is placing junior soldiers into critical positions that require a greater experience base to effectively lead gun crews. Of the 44 howitzers authorized, all are combat capable, but only 22 are fully manned and qualified.

[We] project [that] some subordinate units preparing to deploy will improve and units remaining on Fort Drum will decrease their overall C [readiness] ratings.

Mr. Speaker, the shortages in personnel in later deploying units and in many support positions is, in my view, seriously damaging the overall readiness of the Army. General Shinseki essentially acknowledged that in his confirmation hearing. The Army, he said, is currently able to meet its primary strategic mandate, which is to be prepared to prevail in two nearly simultaneous major theater wars. But the requirement to prevail in the second theater, he warned, could be accomplished only with ''high risk.''

In the vernacular of the military in the 1990s, Mr. Speaker, this is a carefully crafted way of saying that the situation is not acceptable. To say that the mission is ''high risk'' is to say at the very least that the Army would suffer unacceptably high casualties in the event of a conflict. Just as importantly, in my view, it is to say that the units involved are not able to attain the standards which the service has established. For the professional men and women who serve in the force, this is a terribly frustrating situation. It is reflected in complaints that units sent for exercises to the Army's combat training centers in California, Louisiana, and Germany are not as capable as they used to be because shortages have limited the extent and quality of preparatory training at their home bases. It is reflected in the difficulty the service has had in retaining its most highly skilled and accomplished personnel. It is reflected, as well, in evidence of increasing strains on military families caused by frequent and unplanned deployments and excessive workloads when people are at home.

Mr. Speaker, the Army has tried valiantly to adjust to the demands of the post-Cold War environment by managing shortfalls in personnel as best it could. The leadership of the Army has tried to ensure that first-to-fight units have what they need, and, for the rest, they have demonstrated remarkable creativity and flexibility in allocating personnel to fill urgent requirements created by contingency operations and other demands. They have done a good job. The U.S. Army remains the best in the world, and perhaps, the best Army ever in this country or elsewhere. When called upon to perform difficult and demanding missions, the Army has responded magnificently.

But this has come at a price. The continued high pace of operations, the continued turbulence in the force, the continued need to assign hundreds and even thousands of people to temporary duty, the need for others to work harder to make up for shortfalls—all of this is eroding the readiness of the force. The Army needs to work with Congress beginning today to fix the problem. We need to add enough personnel to the force to meet the demands of the post-Cold War world without wearing out so many of the wonderful men and women on whom our security depends. We are wearing them out, Mr. Speaker. It is up to Congress to correct the problem.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about retirement security. This Congress and the administration have I think appropriately made preserving Social Security a top priority for this year. But as this chart demonstrates, it is not enough to simply preserve Social Security. Our public Social Security system is only one part of our overall retirement security programs in this country. Specifically, I believe strongly that we need to take steps this year to significantly increase the availability of secure retirement savings by strengthening the private side, particularly the employer-provided pension side of our retirement system. This is a crucial issue for all Americans but particularly for baby